

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL JA

SUBJECT: JAPAN FOUNDATION AWARD FOR SENATOR FULBRIGHT OCTOBER 2

REF: TOKYO 12040-U

1. JAPAN FOUNDATION NOW INFORMS US SENATOR FULBRIGHT IS RE-CONSIDERING WHETHER HE CAN ACCEPT JAPAN FOUNDATION AWARD BECAUSE OF REPORTED WASHINGTON POST CRITICISM THAT JAPAN FOUNDATION IS GOVERNMENT AGENCY AND AWARD IS JAPANESE GOVERNMENT MONEY. REPORTEDLY FULBRIGHT HAS REQUESTED ADVICE OF DEPARTMENT LEGAL ADVISOR AS TO PROPRIETY OF HIS ACCEPTING THIS GIFT. FOUNDATION HAS ASKED JAPANESE EMBASSY WASHINGTON TO EXPLAIN FOLLOWING POINTS TO DEPARTMENT, IN HOPES THAT DECISION WILL BE FAVORABLE.

2. WHILE FOUNDATION WAS CREATED PRIMARILY WITH GRANTS OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS, THOSE FUNDS ARE INVESTED AND PROGRAMS ARE CONDUCTED FROM ANNUAL INCOME. FOUNDATION EMPLOYEES ARE NOT CONSIDERED GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND FOUNDATION REPRESENTATIVES DO NOT APPEAR IN DIET HEARINGS TO REQUEST OR DEFEND FUNDS FROM GOVERNMENT. THE FUNDS ARE CONSIDERED AS BELONGING TO FOUNDATION AND NOT AS GOJ FUNDS. FOUNDATION ALSO RECEIVES CONTRIBUTIONS OF PRIVATE MONEY.

3. FULBRIGHT WAS NOMINATED UNANIMOUSLY FOR THIS AWARD BY A MOST PRESTIGIOUS COMMITTEE OF JAPANESE PRIVATE CITIZENS, CONSISTING OF SABURO OKITA, ECONOMIST; TOSHIO DOKO, KEIDANREN; YASUSHI INOUE, NOVELIST; SHINTARO FUKUSHIMA, KYOTO NEWS; AND

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TAKASHI MUKAIBO, SCIENCE PROFESSOR. AWARD HAS BEEN WELL

PUBLICIZED AND PRESENTATION CEREMONEY HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 2. A REJECTION OF THE PRIZE BY SENATOR FULBRIGHT WOULD BE HIGHLY EMBARRASSING TO THE FOUNDATION AND TO THE SELECTION COMMITTEE, AND WOULD APPEAR INCONSISTENT WITH THE SPIRIT OF GENUINE APPRECIATION FOR THE FULBRIGHT EXCHANGE PROGRAM, WHICH THE AWARD IS INTENDED TO SIGNIFY.

4. JAPAN FOUNDATION IS ALSO CONCERNED THAT PUBLICITY SURROUNDING A REJECTION WHICH PORTRAYED THE JAPAN FOUNDATION, INCORRECTLY IN THEIR VIEW, AS AN AGENCY OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT COULD BE HIGHLY DAMAGING TO FOUNDATION'S OTHER ACTIVITIES IN U.S. AND ELSEWHERE. FOUNDATION REPRESENTATIVES STATE THAT THEIR AWARDS TO AMERICAN ACADEMICS AND OTHERS ARE ALWAYS PUT FORWARD AS NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-POLITICAL. JAPANESE GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS ARE QUITE SEPARATE, AND ARE CONDUCTED BY MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND OF EDUCATION, THEY POINT OUT.

5. FOUNDATION IS MOST ANXIOUS TO AVOID ANY ABRUPT OR LAST MINUTE CANCELLATION BY FULBRIGHT. THEY ARE READY TO ACCOMMODATE ANY SUGGESTIONS TO MEET U.S. LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS WHICH SENATOR FULBRIGHT MAY WISH TO PROPOSE. HE COULD, FOR EXAMPLE, POSTPONE ACCEPTANCE UNTIL AFTER HIS TERM IN SENATE HAS EXPIRED, OR HE COULD ACCEPT HONOR AND DONATE FUNDS TO AN APPROPRIATE CAUSE.

6. EMBASSY ENDORSES FOUNDATION VIEW THAT ABRUPT AND LAST MINUTE REJECTION BY SENATOR FULBRIGHT, AFTER HIS EARLIER INDICATION OF ACCEPTANCE, WOULD BE DAMAGING TO THE FOUNDATION, TO THE SENATOR, AND TO THE BROADER CAUSE OF U.S.-JAPAN CULTURAL EXCHANGE. THEREFORE, WE HOPE THAT DEPARTMENT AND SENATOR CAN PROVIDE A PROPER BUT ACCOMMODATING ANSWER TO JAPAN FOUNDATION, WITH INFO TO EMBASSY, BEFORE OCTOBER 2.
HODGSON

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